

day or year. It will not be finished during the term of your service. It may not be finished in the life of this great Nation, but it must continue. It will take you all across the globe, from the Adriatic to the Indian Ocean, from the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Japan.

As we honor those who served in World War II, we must also honor those of you who serve now, who are continuing the legacy they left us. For if we learned any lesson from the magnificent, heroic, almost unbelievable endeavor of D-Day, it was that if the allies would stay together and stay strong, we would never need another D-Day. That is what you are guaranteeing, and your country is deeply in your debt.

Let me also say, as I conclude my remarks and congratulate those who are reenlisting, I know this has been a difficult time for many young people who wanted to commit their careers to our Armed Forces because of the downsizing that inevitably came. I want you to know, number one, we're more than half-way through; number two, it will be over in 2 years; number three, there will be more advancements this year than last year, more advancements next year than this year. We still need you. We need your devotion. We need your talent. And the military of the United States is still going to be an important and good place to make a career because it's still defending the security of the greatest nation in the history of the world.

And now I would like to introduce, to continue the reenlistment, the new Chief of Naval Operations, a man who has done a terrific job for our country in dealing with the problems in Bosnia and elsewhere throughout his naval career, a man who has come a long way since he started, Admiral Mike Boorda. Please welcome him.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:01 p.m. aboard the ship. In his remarks, he referred to Capt. Robert Sprigg, captain of the U.S.S. *George Washington*. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Wolf Blitzer of CNN

June 5, 1994

Foreign Policy

Mr. Blitzer. Mr. President, did you ever think that you'd be going on this 50th anniversary commemoration of D-Day, a past war, and have to focus at the same time on a potential new one?

The President. Well, I never thought I'd be going on the D-Day thing, and it's been a great honor to do it. But even as we honor the past, we know the only way we can ultimately honor the past is to keep faith with it in the present. So I have to continue to deal with the problems that are here.

Mr. Blitzer. Where is the most likely spot in the world today for the next war?

The President. I don't want to say that, because if I do it'll only be interpreted as predicting American involvement. Our interests are at stake obviously in a number of places. I will say this, the possibility of a war that can be damaging to our existence is significantly less now. We concluded this agreement with the Russians and the Ukrainians, the Kazakhs and the people from Belarus, so they're moving nuclear weapons out of those other three states into Russia. The Russians and the Americans are no longer pointing their nuclear weapons at each other. We are working hard at defusing the kinds of problems that could really threaten our existence.

But it's still a very dangerous world. At any given time for the last several years there have been lots of wars, small wars, going on around the world. And there are still a lot of ethnic and racial hatred, still a lot of problems caused by vast numbers of poor people, without any kind of sustainable environment, pouring across national borders that are artificial and fighting with each other. It's a big problem not just in Africa but in other places. And we're going to have a difficult time containing those conflicts and promoting democracy as we move into the 21st century.

But I believe we can do it. And I believe one of the reasons we'll be able to do it is

that the vision of the people who won the D-Day battle was that the allies and others of goodwill might work together to contain future conflicts. And that's what we're doing.

North Korea

Mr. Blitzer. How serious is the situation involving North Korea right now?

The President. Well, that's largely up to them. The important thing is that they agreed several years ago to be part of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which means that they agreed to subject themselves to inspections that would enable the rest of the world to determine whether they were diverting nuclear fuel from their reactors that would be used to make nuclear weapons or could be. They have subjected themselves to those inspections now as it relates to anything they could do from now into the future. But they still haven't been willing to subject themselves to appropriate inspections relating to removals they did in 1989.

Is it serious at the moment? Perhaps not. Could it be used to make a bomb and could that bomb be used either against their neighbors in South Korea or maybe be sold to another rogue state? Perhaps so. So we're being very firm. We're moving toward the United Nations Security Council with a sanctions resolution. We're engaging our allies and others in the area that have a real interest in this. I think both China and Japan, as well as Russia and South Korea, clearly do not want North Korea to be a nuclear state. And we're doing the best we can to head it off.

Mr. Blitzer. Is there a diplomatic way out? How are you creating a situation for North Korea to back down with some face-saving opportunity?

The President. Well, we have created many, many such opportunities, and they've rejected them all. After all, we've worked real hard to get these negotiations on track. And the North Koreans did in fact allow the inspections that would enable us to tell today about what they could do tomorrow. It is the past that they don't want to permit us to look into. And they still will have significant numbers of opportunities before they'll be, I think, hurt by the sanctions. But we have to go forward with the sanctions resolution, I think.

Mr. Blitzer. Is there a window, 3 to 4 weeks, 5 weeks, during which period the North Koreans could back down?

The President. Well, there's a window, and the window—of course, there's nothing to stop them from reaching an accommodation from now on into the future. But I think we have to move ahead now.

The incentives are enormous. When North Korea decided to join the nonproliferation group and say we won't make atomic weapons and we want you to inspect, they made a bigger decision. Their decision was, we're going to reach out to the rest of the world, not withdraw from it. They made a decision they would try to work out their problems with South Korea, that they wanted a relationship with the United States and Japan as well as with China and Russia. Now China and Russia have both changed. They've moved closer to our way of thinking, and the North Koreans, for reasons we don't understand, are seeming to move in the other way.

The door is still open for them to become part of the world community, and that's what we want. And I think that's in their national interest. It's good for their people; it's good for their prestige.

Mr. Blitzer. Some have said that there's this cat-and-mouse game—they've come up and gone back down—that they're doing this again, testing you. Are they?

The President. It's hard to know what they're doing. All I know is that our actions all along have been dictated by their actions. That is, we have not sought a confrontation with them. We have been very firm. We have a treaty obligation to South Korea. Our interests are tied to South Korea's security. And our commitment, our solemn word is tied there.

But more importantly, North Korea promised not to become a nuclear power. They're still isolated. They're still very Communist. They still deal with a lot of rogue states that support terrorism. And so we're just responding to their actions. But the door is always open for them to take a different path, and we hope they will.

The Cabinet

Mr. Blitzer. On the eve of your departure for this D-Day commemorative event, there

were all sorts of stories in Washington—you were thinking of shaking up your national security team, Secretary of State, National Security Adviser. You took the unusual step of calling a reporter from the L.A. Times and trying to deny that. Why?

The President. Well, the reason I called the reporter is that we had been notified that he allegedly had talked to someone fairly high in the administration who said that. And since it wasn't so, I thought I ought to say that.

I didn't think on the eve of this trip, which is so terribly important for our relationships in Europe, not just looking backward but building on this magnificent achievement of D-Day, looking to the post-cold-war era, with all the things that are going on in Korea and elsewhere that we needed to have another story about personnel. I think that our policies are sound, that we're moving to implement them. I wanted to be free to talk to the British Prime Minister, to the French Prime Minister and President, to the new Prime Minister of Italy about what we're going to do together. And I think I have been free to do that. That's why I did that.

The President's Father

Mr. Blitzer. You've spent some time speaking publicly about your father and his role in the war in Italy. How much has that been a part of this whole experience for you—going back and—a father you never knew?

The President. It's been very important for me. When I was a little boy my mother would—told me all she knew and all my father would say about the war. A lot of the veterans didn't want to talk much about it. But she told me he'd worked in maintaining the motorized vehicles and trying to figure out how they were going to get them off of the landing craft and onto the beaches and how they would keep them maintained.

I didn't know much about the Italian campaign until I was older and began to read about it. But coming back here, one of the things I was able to do is read the history of his unit. It's written by the lieutenant who was the designated historian. I read the monthly histories, I guess, for a year and a half during the period he was in Italy. It only

mentioned him, I think, once or twice, once when he briefly transferred out to another unit and came back. But it talked about the movies they saw, the fact that Joe Louis came to see them, described what they did. And in some ways, I guess, it was the most graphic account I had of any period in his life. So it meant a lot to me. And I was again very proud that he had participated in this.

Foreign Policy

Mr. Blitzer. Throughout these last several days, as you've reflected on what your predecessors had to do 50 years ago, has it ever entered your mind that you may be in that same situation—or have you been in a similar kind of situation—where you have to make a decision involving the life and death of a lot of young men and women?

The President. Yes, it has entered my mind. And the thing that I am impressed by is that Roosevelt and Churchill when they thought of the United Nations were cold-eyed realists. They never had any idea that there could be some utopian world, a government, you know, where all problems would go away. What they thought was that after this war we would be able, the great powers would be able to find ways to contain aggression before it got too big to deal with, short of a horrible war like this and a D-Day invasion, if they worked together, not that they could solve all the problems, not that we should enter every conflict but at least that we could help to contain these things.

And now in the post-cold-war era, when we really now are returning to what they were thinking about 50 years ago, that is, during the cold war our very existence was once again on the line in a very different way. Now the question is whether we will have the vision and the discipline to deal with these problems and at least contain them and try to work through them over the long run. That's what we've sought to do in Bosnia, not to commit our soldiers to intervene in the conflict but to contain it and work toward its resolution. And that's what we've sought to do in many other places in the world. That's what we have sought to do with our humanitarian aid mission in Somalia, to at least give those people some breathing space so they could put something back together

and you wouldn't have a conflict that again could engulf millions of people.

We will not always be successful, but the big success, that is, preventing another world conflict and preventing the commitment of millions of Americans to a life-or-death struggle, we can avoid that if we proceed with discipline. And that is a thing that weighs on my mind as I watch Normandy unfold again after 50 years.

Mr. Blitzer. Thank you very much. We're out of time.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 8 p.m. aboard the U.S.S. *George Washington* en route to Normandy, France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Harry Smith of CBS

June 5, 1994

Role as Commander in Chief

Mr. Smith. I've been talking with a lot of veterans, and a lot of them respect you as Commander in Chief. Some of them aren't so sure. Do you feel like you have something to prove to them?

The President. No more than to any other Americans, except I think that the veterans of this country are entitled to know what they fought for in the Second World War is not going to be squandered at the end of the cold war. We understood, I think all of us understood, what we had to do as a country when communism rose at the end of the Second World War and took over Eastern Europe. And basically there was nothing we could do about it. I think everybody knew there was nothing we could do about that. But we were able to draw a line in the sand in Europe; we were able to limit the expansion in Korea. Maybe we made some mistakes in overreacting not perhaps just in Vietnam but in Central America because we were so worried about communism. But at least we did do that. We contained communism until it could collapse of its own failures and the truth reaching in to all these Communist countries. And even when we erred, we did so with—in good faith I think.

Now, at the end of the cold war, people are having a lot of questions about what's our

national defense for or how do we keep our prestige alive and what's our job now in the world. It is a difficult and different world. And what I owe them is to make sure that we always have a strong, well-prepared, well-motivated, highly supportive military and that we move to contain the chaos and madness that is still abroad in the world and limit it so that our very existence is not again threatened by alien powers and so we never again have to do a D-Day. I owe them that. And I'm going to do my best to pay them.

Mr. Smith. Do you feel comfortable in your role as Commander in Chief?

The President. Oh, yes. I worked very hard at it. I've spent an awful lot of time with the service chiefs. I've spent a good deal of time out and around with the various services. I have tried to get to know pretty well a lot of the officers who have to make recommendations on policies and then have to carry them out. I've really worked at it.

If you come to the Presidency from a Governorship, you only have experience insofar as any of your forces, that is, our National Guard had been involved in something like Desert Storm, or if you've got to call them up for some terrible emergency. It's very different. It's something that I knew I'd have to invest a lot of time and effort in, especially at the end of the cold war. A Governor could more easily move into the role of Commander in Chief during the cold war because the road map was a lot clearer. So I have had to devote a good deal of time to it and still do. But it's something I enjoy, something I believe in, and something that is very important to me. The lives of these men on this ship are very precious to me. And I am well aware that if I send them out into harm's way, I need to be as right as God will let me be right and that this enormous power the United States has now has its limits and its possibilities and clearly its responsibilities.

D-Day Commemoration

Mr. Smith. It is hard to be in Europe now during this time, especially in places that you've been and places you will go, and not do some soul-searching. Have you been doing some?

The President. Sure, I think we all have. I think everybody who's been part of this ex-